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[South Vietnam: Some Communist regimental-level elements are continuing to move away from forward combat zones.

There has been additional disengagement by enemy units in Quang Nam Province and also in the III Corps area. Significant Communist main force elements still remain in some primary combat areas, however, and more local attacks could be coming in the near future.

* * * *

Coup rumors and nervousness over possible anti-government demonstrations have apparently caused Saigon authorities to order Vietnamese forces in III Corps into a special alert status. The authorities have reports that some low-level military officers plan to provoke demonstrations against the Saigon regime for its alleged "soft" stand on the Paris peace talks.

Although there is no evidence at present that any high-level personages are involved in plotting against the government, it is clear that President Thieu is worried about the situation. Early last month, he placed the Saigon police on alert following a coup report which later proved unfounded.

Saigon's rumor mills are likely to be particularly active during the next few weeks with tales of intrigue and forecasts of personnel shifts. South Vietnam's National Day on 1 November is traditionally a time for announcements of changes in the assignment of military personnel, and stories are already abroad to the effect that President Thieu plans changes that will further strengthen his position at the expense of the supporters of Vice President Ky. These rumors are likely to be fanned into claims that one group or another is planning to move against the Thieu regime. [REDACTED]

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[Czechoslovakia-USSR: Czechoslovak leaders still are not reconciled to full submission to Moscow's demands.

The communiqué issued after yesterday's presidium meeting indicated that Prague intends to salvage what it can while talking about the concessions it may make to the Russians. The statement thus suggests that the Czechoslovaks will make the immediate policy changes that Moscow desires in areas of personnel, ideology, propaganda, censorship, and centralization of the economy. It partially contradicts itself, however, by emphasizing that the Czechoslovaks will continue many of Dubcek's liberal policies, and that there will be no purge at the top level of the party. Prague also intends to proceed with federalization of the country, even though some Soviet officials--including special envoy Kuznetsov--have reportedly cautioned against it.

Although the statement did not precisely say what measures the Czechoslovaks intend to take, the presidium promised to submit a list of "tasks"--presumably reflecting Soviet desires--to the party central committee, probably next week. The vague language of the communiqué will make it difficult for Moscow to fathom exactly where the Czechoslovaks are going. It will be clear to the Soviets, however, that the Prague leadership is still collectively defiant, in the sense that it will not abandon the concept of a uniquely Czechoslovak way to socialism.

The nature of one main Czechoslovak concession, however, became evident when Deputy Premier Hamouz reportedly led a 15-member Czechoslovak Government delegation to Moscow yesterday to negotiate a status-of-forces agreement. Such an agreement would presumably provide the basis for an indefinite Soviet occupation. [redacted] the occupation forces would be composed of about 100,000]

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[troops. [redacted]
the reduction of the present occupation force to this figure may be completed by late October.

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Slovak party chief Husak, who went to Moscow with Dubcek last week, reported yesterday to his party presidium. After approving the report, the presidium took immediate steps to impose new controls on Slovak information media. The party directive ordered an increase in the amount of time and space devoted to propaganda and to political indoctrination in the press, radio, and television.

The Soviet ambassador in Prague met with the Czechoslovak minister of justice on 7 October, possibly to discuss the termination of another phase of Dubcek's liberalization--the rehabilitation of former political prisoners. The Russians will surely prevent the reopening of any more trials that would again expose Moscow's role in the bloody purges of the Stalinist era. [redacted]

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India-Pakistan: A new exchange of recriminations has intensified the propaganda war between the two countries.

Both governments have used the podium of the UN General Assembly to reiterate their customary positions on disputes which lie closest to the hard core of Indo-Pakistani hostility. The Pakistani foreign minister renewed the call for a plebiscite in Kashmir, protested the treatment of the Muslim minority in India, and urged meaningful negotiations on the diversion of Ganges water by India's Farakka Barrage. India countered Pakistan's "baseless charges" with an unequivocal claim to Kashmir, an assertion that Pakistan had committed aggression against India three times in recent years, and an expression of concern over discrimination against Hindu minorities in Pakistan.

India has tried to back its allegations of Pakistani interference in India's internal affairs by releasing in New Delhi copies of supposedly captured documents which purport to demonstrate that Pakistani officials have aided dissidents in eastern India. Some of the documents "verify" the training and arming of some 3,000 Naga tribesmen in East Pakistan prior to 1965. Evidence of similar support to the Mizo rebels is said to include letters from one of their leaders to President Ayub thanking Pakistan for sympathy and financial assistance.

There was considerable disagreement within New Delhi's Ministry of External Affairs about releasing the documents and thus breaking a lull in the Indo-Pakistani propaganda war. Indian President Husain, a Muslim who favors a more moderate approach, has been greatly disturbed by the ministry's decision to revive a hard line toward Pakistan. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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Ceylon: The pro-Moscow Communist Party is in disarray after its central committee on 7 October voted by a narrow majority to condemn the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia.

In August, the party's initial announcement on the crisis had stated the situation was too unclear to reach a conclusion on the necessity of the Soviet invasion. Since then, other elements in Ceylon's leftist opposition coalition have pressed the party to join in censuring the Soviet invasion, and this resulted in the recent meeting of the central committee. General Secretary Keuneman led the faction supporting the vote. Although he personally believes the Soviet action was justified, he thinks the party's position in the coalition is more important than ideology.

The defeated committee members announced their intention of calling a general party convention in January 1969 to repudiate Keuneman's group. Keuneman will seek to block the convention by arguing that the censure resolution was merely an expedient to preserve the unity of the opposition. Regardless of the outcome, relations within the pro-Moscow party will be severely strained at a time when it is preparing for the 1970 elections. [REDACTED]

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NATO: The possibility of organizing a caucus within NATO that could speak for Europe is attracting new interest among the European allies.

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[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] The West Germans have become more receptive to the idea of a European caucus within NATO since their failure to get firmer security guarantees from President De Gaulle.

Belgium's foreign minister has announced that he will reissue his own proposal for a caucus at the meeting on 21 October of the Western European Union, which he regards as the logical forum for discussing European interests within NATO. [REDACTED]

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Italy: The new Italian delegation to the parliament of the European Communities is likely to include Communists.

Prime Minister Leone favors a delegation more representative of the Italian parliament, which is about one-fourth Communist. Italian Socialists support the inclusion, and rightist opposition is unlikely to be effective in blocking it. Italy would be the first country to bring Communists to the European parliament.

The Italian Communist Party has for some time taken a more positive interest in the communities than the Communist parties in the other member countries. It is critical of the Common Market's policies but recognizes their importance to the interests of Italy and therefore wants a voice in policy making.

The few Communists who may be included in Italy's delegation are not likely to disrupt the workings of the European parliament. The party has profited greatly on the Italian domestic scene by showing a capacity to work with non-Communists. Some of those associated with the community have long advocated a Communist presence in the parliament as a step toward making community institutions more representative and to emphasize their political character.

Italy's move could strengthen the Italian Communists' belief that their present relative autonomy within the international Communist movement improves their domestic political position.

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International Labor: The International Federation of Christian Trade Unions (IFCTU) has become "de-Christianized" and has adopted a new name--the World Confederation of Labor (WCL).

The IFCTU decision was made at a congress in Luxembourg last week attended by about 200 delegates representing a claimed membership of nearly 13 million workers. Many of the delegates saw the name change as an opportunity to open the doors to millions of Muslim, Buddhist, and other workers who had been reluctant to gather under an umbrella with a Christian trademark. The WCL is, nevertheless, expected to maintain the IFCTU's ties to the Vatican and church-linked social programs. Other delegates clearly were thinking of posing a challenge to the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU)--deemed dominated by the AFL-CIO and influenced by US foreign policy--as well as presenting an alternative to the Communist-dominated World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU).

The International Labor Organization was subjected to extreme criticism during the congress, which may foreshadow an attempt by the WCL to secure a major redistribution of representation on the organization's governing body. The IFCTU has always maintained that the ICFTU has monopolized worker representation in the International Labor Organization.

The Latin American group in the WCL, represented by the Latin American Federation of Christian Trade Unionists, will probably engage in considerable baiting of the US in the new organization. It remains to be seen whether the leadership--in order to obtain new adherents among dissident trade unionists of the new or old left--will be tempted by this line.

Closer relations with the WFTU were hinted at in the secretary general's report to the congress, but his report did not include a meaningful plan of action.

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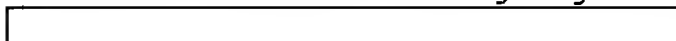
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Cuba: The execution of two "confessed saboteurs" on 7 October underlines Fidel Castro's determination to put an end to "counterrevolutionary" acts. The "saboteurs" were blamed for a fire in a government warehouse in Camaguey that caused damages totaling 1.5 million pesos. Castro indicated in his speech on 28 September that he is concerned with the increasing number of acts of "sabotage" and promised to deal swiftly and strongly with such manifestations of discontent.

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South Africa: In a move to strengthen its navy and shipbuilding industry, South Africa has announced plans for the construction of its first domestically produced naval craft. The ship will be a 121-foot diving and torpedo recovery launch. The new launch probably will be used in torpedo training exercises with the Daphne-class submarines purchased from France last year. The French submarines, which probably will be delivered by 1971, were ordered after the US and the UK refused South African orders because of the arms embargo against that country.



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